

Appl. No. 10/713,233  
Amendment dated November 22, 2004

PATENT

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1. (previously presented) A method comprising:

obtaining a lip having an upper surface, a lower surface, a front portion, a rear portion, a plurality of holes disposed between the front portion and the rear portion and extending from the upper surface to the lower surface, and a plurality of support members, wherein each support member is disposed adjacent to a hole from the plurality of holes and inhibits lateral movement of a tooth assembly coupled to the hole; and

attaching a plurality of tooth assemblies to the lip, wherein the tooth assemblies extend away from the lip and are respectively coupled to the lip via the plurality of holes.

Claim 2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the lip is U-shaped.

Claim 3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the plurality of holes is a first plurality of holes, and wherein the lip further comprises a second plurality of holes disposed at the front portion of the lip; and wherein the lip assembly further comprises:

a plurality of lip shrouds on the front portion of the lip, wherein the lip shrouds in the plurality of lip shrouds are respectively coupled to the lip via the second plurality of holes:

Claim 4. (previously presented) The method of claim 3 wherein the front portion includes projections and valleys, and wherein each of the second plurality of holes is disposed between adjacent valleys.

Claim 5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein each of the tooth assemblies comprise:

a tooth, an adapter, and an adapter shroud, wherein the adapter shroud is disposed between the adapter and the tooth.

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Claim 6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the lip comprises steel.

Claim 7. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein each hole of the plurality of holes is disposed between a pair of support members, and wherein one tooth assembly is received between the pair of support members.

Claim 8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the support members are ribs.

Claim 9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the support members are disposed at the lower surface of the lip.

Claim 10. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the lip further comprises a plurality of block elements disposed at respective ends of the tooth assemblies.

Claim 11. (previously presented) A method comprising:

obtaining a U-shaped lip having (i) an upper surface, (ii) a lower surface, (iii) a front portion having projections and valleys, (iv) a rear portion, (v) a first plurality of holes disposed between front portion and the rear portion and extending from the upper surface to the lower surface, (vi) a second plurality of holes disposed at the front portion, (vii) a plurality of ribs at the lower surface of the lip, wherein each hole of the first plurality of holes is disposed between a pair of ribs to inhibit the lateral movement of a tooth assembly disposed between the pair of ribs, and (viii) a plurality of lip shrouds respectively disposed on the projections of the front portion of the lip; and

attaching at least one of a tooth, an adapter, or an adapter shroud to the lip, wherein the tooth, the adapter and the adapter shroud forms a tooth assembly, and wherein the attached at least one tooth, adapter, or adapter shroud extends away from the lip and is coupled to the lip via the at least one of the first plurality of holes.

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Claim 12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the pair of ribs is spaced by a distance approximately equal to the width of the tooth, the adapter, or the adapter shroud.

Claim 13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the ribs are welded to a main body of the lip:

Claim 14. (previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the lip further comprises a plurality of block members.

Claims 15-28. (canceled)

Claim 29. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising: attaching the lip to an excavation bucket body.

Claim 30. (previously presented) The method of claim 11 further comprising: attaching the lip to an excavation bucket body.